

**HORACE GRANT UNDERWOOD AND  
LILLIAS HORTON UNDERWOOD  
PAPERS**

**Volume V**

**1914-1922**

Transcribed  
by  
Sung-Deuk Oak

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## PREFACE

Rev. Horace Grant Underwood (1859-1916), the first American clerical missionary to Korea and founder of Yonsei University, arrived in Seoul in April, 1885. The future Mrs. Underwood, Dr. Lillias Sterling Horton (1851-1921), one of the first woman medical missionaries, followed in March of 1888. Both missionaries devoted their lives to the Christianization and modernization of Korea until death. Their life long service spanned the foundational stage of the Presbyterian Church in Korea from beginning to end, and their lives are microcosms of the historical formation of Protestantism in Korea. Their lives were also interwoven with the complications of modern Korea from its opening to the Western world to its suffering under Japanese colonialism. Therefore, researching their various roles in modern Korea is as important as the study of their contributions to early Korean Christianity.

The missionary couple authored many books, despite a demanding workload. Dr. Underwood published *The Call of Korea* (1908) and *The Religions of East Asia* (1910), as well as a Korean-English dictionary and a Korean grammar manual. Mrs. Underwood, gifted in writing as well as in medicine, wrote *Fifteen Years among the Top-Knots* (1904), *With Tommy Tompkins in Korea* (1905), and *Underwood of Korea* (1918). Most were reprinted in Korea or translated into Korean. (Dr. Mahn-yol Yi translated *Underwood of Korea* into Korean in 1990.)

Their far-reaching and multi-dimensional works, however, require more in-depth and wide-ranging research based on the extensive collection of primary sources. When he left for Korea on a transpacific steamship from San Francisco in December, 1884, Mr. Underwood brought along a typewriter gifted by his brother John T. Underwood, a businessman and a director of the Board of the Foreign Missions, PCUSA. In his early years in a new mission field, Underwood used the typewriter every other day and produced page after page recording his experiences, and mailed these reports to the Board, his friends, relatives, and churches in the United States. It is safe to say that his energetic literary work contributed to the successful development of the Korea mission. Therefore, the unearthing and reading of his and his wife's handwritten or typewritten manuscripts is essential for the understanding of their lifelong work which is crucial for a complete picture of turn-of-the-century modern Korea. The primary reason why the editors collected these materials and publish them in the four-volume Underwood Papers was to overcome the poverty in primary sources of the early Korean Christianity mission.

The editors, believing in the significance of the more than 2,000 Protestant missionaries in modern Korea, have collected the primary missionary documents for the past twenty plus years. We have collectively made some of them available to the public since the publication of *Henry G. Appenzeller: the First American Missionary to Korea* in 1985. (Dr. Sung-Deuk Oak published *Sources of Korean Christianity, 1832-1945*, an English sourcebook, in 2004) Yet we made the joint decision that the comprehensive collection of the original materials of each missionary, not a selected version, would be more useful for the scholars who we hope will enrich the history of Korean Christianity with diverse viewpoints. The Underwood Papers is the fruit of our long partnership,

collaborative work, and shared vision. We are preparing for similar collections of material from early missionaries to Korea.

The support of the Institute for Korean Studies of Yonsei University made it possible for the editors to make the long cherished idea of the Underwood Papers into a tangible project. The Institute, which has a distinguished tradition of research in Korean Studies, has deepened its concern and search for the identity of the University in the twenty-first century. When they approached the history of the University, they began to pay attention to its missionary roots. It was natural for Yonsei University to focus on its founder H. G. Underwood initially in order to affirm its identity from the historical viewpoint and rich heritage. Professor In-hoe Kim, director of the Institute for Korean Studies, agreed to the editors' plan and promised to support the publication of the Underwood Papers. This project is facilitated in such a historical milieu of the University and by the generous support of the Institute.

This five-volume Underwood Papers is a collection of Mr. and Mrs. Underwood's letters and personal annual reports to the New York Board of Foreign Missions, PCUSA, published articles in the mission magazines in the U. S., Korea, Japan, and China, and public addresses, from 1885 to 1916 (1921). Thus Mr. and Mrs. Underwood Papers would be a better title. The English part carries the transcribed original English texts and the Korean part then the translated texts with footnotes. The Institute initially agreed to publish them as a four-volume series, and then expanded it into a five-volume. The main reason of the revision of the plan is that the editor found more correspondence of Underwood over the "College Question." Each volume covers the following years.

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| The first volume  | 1885-1892 |
| The second volume | 1893-1900 |
| The third volume  | 1901-1908 |
| The fourth volume | 1909-1913 |
| The fifth volume  | 1914-1921 |

The last two volumes, therefore, cover the "College Question" in part. Underwood participated in the controversy as a central figure and advocated for the establishment of the Union Christian College in Seoul, which eventually developed into today's Yonsei University. These volumes will enumerate the background history of the establishment of Yonsei University.

The Koreans called Underwood "Nolbun nalgae" (Wide Wings), for he covered so many things in evangelism, Bible translation, publication, education, and medicine. Once he said that a missionary should become a jack-of-all-trades. In the first decade, he served as medical assistant at the government hospital, pastor of the first organized Presbyterian church in Korea, superintendent of an orphanage, itinerating evangelist in North Korea, treasurer of the mission, supervisor of the mission buildings, chairman of the translation of the Scriptures and the tracts, a hymnbook editor, a dictionary and grammar book editor, manager of the private printing press, a mission strategist, and a fund raiser and missionary recruiter. He also started Korean studies as a missionary scholar.

Underwood was also called "Pul donggari" (a bundle of fire), for he had a burning passion for the lost as an evangelist and was filled with fervent spirituality as a leader. What he did was the embodiment of what he was. He was not only a man of activities and

achievements, but also a man of character, conviction, heart, personality, spirit, theology and vision. He regarded himself as a debtor (in the sense of St. Paul) to the Koreans; he repeated, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." His motive for mission was disinterested love. He lived under the supreme command to "Go forward" to the end of the earth, with the conviction that the Commander "is with you always, even unto the end." Hence, he "never said and did any unkind word in action, yet he had some of the English bulldog trait of holding till death, if need be, where he feels that a matter of principle is at stake." Yet he never ceased to look and pray for the glorious Second Coming of Christ.

Underwood lived with evangelistic enthusiasm and eschatological expectation, with a long-term vision for a new Korea, the "Christian Korea." Like a soaring eagle, he had wide wings and acute eyes for the evangelization of Korea in his generation. He was a "bundle of fire," relaying the fire of Spirit to one generation to the next for the Christianization of Korea.

Although the cover of this book has co-editors' names, Dr. Oak did all the works of the collection, transcription, and translation of the sources. Dr. Yi guided the whole project from its conception and acted as midwife by correcting the final manuscripts. Transcribing from the microfilm texts is a time-consuming job. Rev. Oak painstakingly deciphered most of the notoriously difficult handwriting of Mrs. Underwood, a medical doctor. There are still some unidentified parts due the vagueness of the original texts. We ask the readers' understanding for these inevitable omissions.

We are deeply grateful to the following individuals and institutions that helped us in collecting the materials: the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia, PA; Rev. James Underwood of Maine who made the initial proofreading of the English text of the first volume; Dr. S. Hugh Moffett of Princeton, NJ; and libraries and mission archives of Princeton Theological seminary, Yale Divinity School, and Drew University. Professors In-hoe Kim, Do-hyong Kim, Hyun-chul Do, Kyu-sik Chang, Lwang-ho Lee, and Bong-joon Choi of Yonsei University enabled this book to be published. We thank the editors of the *Tongbang Hakchi* and the Yonsei University Press for their skillful touch in making these handsome volumes.

We hope that the Underwood Papers will be used as good sources for serious research not only on the history of Korean Christianity and world missions, but also on modern Korea. We also hope that this collection will stimulate a more systematic study on the missionaries to Korea and comprehensive collections of their primary materials.

January 2010

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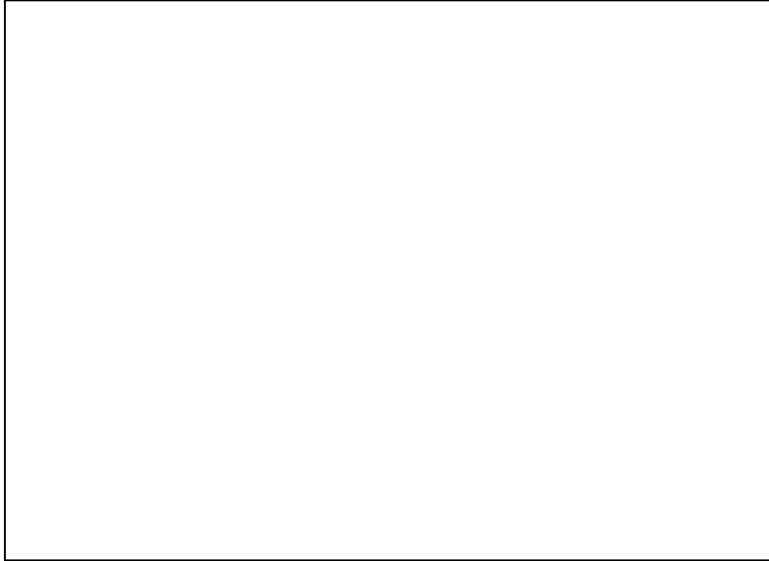
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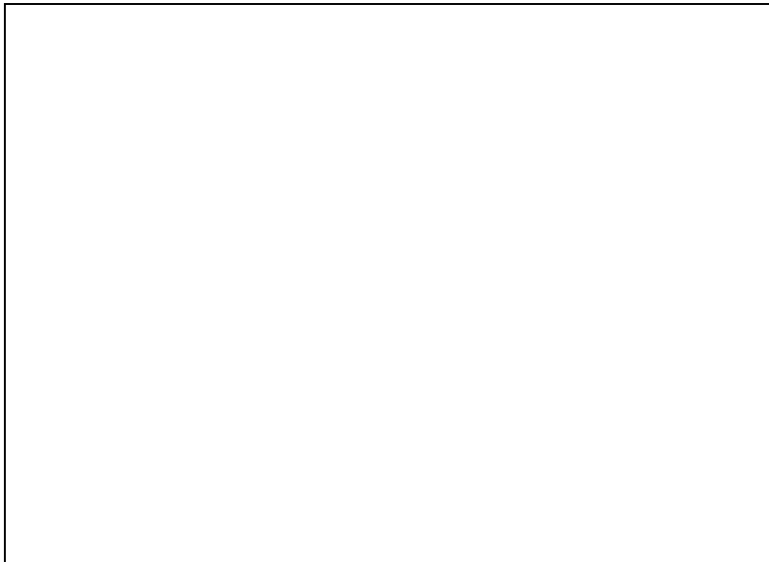
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## **CORRESPONDENCE**

**1914-1916**

Mr. and Mrs. Underwood's letters to A. J. Brown and the Committee of the New York Board are from the microfilms of *The Correspondence and Reports of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church of the USA, 1912-1956, Korea Missions* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society, 1957). The microfilm editors made a separate file for the letters related to the college controversy in 1910s. Yet the editor of this book arranged all the letters chronologically without separating them from the letters of the general nature, for they deal with the college question to some extent.

The letters sent to Dr. John F. Goucher are photocopied from "John F. Goucher Papers" at the International Mission Library of New York Union Theological Seminary.





-----1914-----

Yokohama, Japan, January 2, 1914.

Rev. Arthur J. Brown, D. D.  
Board of Foreign Missions,  
156 Fifth Ave.,  
New York City

Dear Dr. Brown:

I hope you and Dr. Speer will pardon me for troubling you so much with my letters in regard to Korean Affairs. My only excuse is that there are some things that I think you ought to know that you may not hear from other sources.

Consul-General Sammons wrote to me on the 2nd of December as follows: The controversy between the Japanese authorities and the American missionaries is daily becoming more disquieting; and as you feel more, more disturbing so far as the class of American missionaries is generally concerned. The present controversy results largely from newspaper agitation, which is based to a considerable extent on statements made by an American missionary who arraigns the Japanese authorities, particularly on the charge of having tortured Koreans in the recent Conspiracy Trial. In reply to this arraignment, some of the Japanese authorities, as well as the Japanese subjects who resent the imputation, now proceed to denounce the alleged interference of the missionaries in national administration affairs ...

It is a matter of common knowledge that during my services in Korea the charge of sedition was lodged against a prominent American missionary (Dr. Underwood, H. G.)... He continued to avoid further direct or indirect interference with natives, whether Christians or not, as regards obeying Japan's laws and administrative policies.

It may be well for you and others concerned in placing prevailing conditions before the home Boards to seek early and final action on the report of the "Committee on Missions" as presented at the famous Edinburgh Conference. (He is mistaken as to presentation. It should have been prepared by the Committee, H. G.) The recommendation referred to especially is the one saying, "The relation of the missionary to the convert is purely religious etc, etc."

On Saturday night, December 4th, a gentleman just returned from New York handed me a copy of letter which had been sent to our Board of Foreign Missions by Rev. H. Loomis of Yokohama, Japan, the opening part of which I have quoted above.

I thought at once the only thing for me to do was to send you the same and ask you whether you have been correctly quoted, and if so, might I have an explanation of the same?

Personally, I cannot but think that there is some mistake in the quotations.

My relations to the former Royal family of Korea might lead some people to think that I would take an attitude of opposition to the present regime, but I have strictly refrained from doing and have simply, whenever individuals have been oppressive, striven to bring such specific acts to the attention of the authorities.

Statements may have been made contrary to this, but facts are facts. If the true facts are told, the above can easily be proven.

Thanking you beforehand for your early reply,

I am,

Yours sincerely,

H. G. Underwood.

Seoul, Korea, January 3, 1914.

Rev. Arthur J. Brown, D. D.

Board of Foreign Missions,

156 Fifth Ave.,

New York City, U.S.A<sup>1</sup>

My Dear Dr. Brown:

I am sending you herewith a copy of letter Mr. Koons and I have just sent to Mr. James H. Post, Dr. Well's son-in-law in connection with the need for a dormitory at the John D. Well's Academy, Seoul.

This matter has been up for sometime, and I was given to understand by Miss Tooker that Mr. Post might be willing and able to give the Board the money for this institution.

You will note a slight difference in figures here and those in the Mission's Request for an Appropriation for last year. This is due to the added cost of building materials and is not for enlargement but for the making of building. It will be duly brought before the next meeting of Mission. As it is simply for what has been already approve, I doubt not be passed by the Missions. I write this o you so that you may know what we are doing.

With best wishes for Mrs. Brown and your good self, for the New Year,

Yours Sincerely,

H. G. Underwood.

Enclosure:

Seoul, Korea, January 2, 1914.

Mr. James E. Post,

New York City,

Dear Sir:

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter the head address of Arthur J. Brown is omitted in Underwood's letters. Likewise that of Underwood was also omitted.

The interest that you and your family have always shown in this school, make us sure you will enjoy reading the enclosed account of the Installation Exercise, and the write-up of the school and its work printed in the Government paper at the time.

The school is certainly prospering, and shows a steady improvement, both in the teaching staff and in the student body. A Korean friend, who is himself a graduate of an American College, and whose son is in our second grade, said recently "You have the best-manned and best-equipped school in the country". Boys are applying for admission every week. We do not take any at this time, except those transferred from other schools for special reasons, but we are sure of a large number who will enter at the beginning of the coming year, April 10.

Last year more than 100 entered as new students at the beginning of the year. We will graduate 15, and send the Medical Collage as many more, out of our whole 180. So the coming year we will see us with 250 or more students, without any question.

In November we moved the Industrial Department into its fine new building. We gave the job to some of the lads who are working their way, and they did it all, working before and after school hours. They took down the hand-loom, moved them, and set them up, in working order. They cleaned the windows, and put the building in good shape, and seem to take a real pride in keeping things neat and clean, not such an easy thing to do, where weaving is going on. You will understand that all this means more in Korea than it would in the U.S.A.

The school's most pressing need at this time is a Dormitory. So far we have had to let our students from out of town board with Korean families near the school, or live with friends and relatives scattered through the city, or club together and board themselves in some old Korean houses on the school property.

We have tried to look after them all, and there is a plan of recognizing as regular Boarding Houses only those that come up to certain requirements. But this has given very poor results. At present, 46 bare Boarding in the regular boarding-houses, 15 are living with relatives, and 30 are boarding themselves.

These last club together in groups of 3 or 4, and try to get along as cheaply as possible, and sometimes they live too cheaply for their own good. During November some were making it on \$1.45 a month, less than 5 cents a day! Of course this does not mean luxury, even in Korea. (The regular rate is \$2.75 a month). They had a mixture of millet and beans, boiled with salt for the only relish, and two meals a day of this. While every Korean house has a fire under the hollow stone floor every night in cold weather, these lads were economizing by cooking on little fires outside, and sleeping on the cold stone floors. This sort of thing seriously affected their classroom work, and of course having some students so handicapped was a hindrance to the whole of the classes they were in, and unfair to all concerned.

Only a few were so hard up as this, and the Principal put an end to this privation, for the good of the whole school. The Industrial Department advanced them money, to be paid back out of their earnings, and to be paid by the Principal if they cannot make it good. So in December every lad had three satisfying meals and a good place to sleep. The improvement in their work was marked enough to show that the experiment paid. The whole matter

shows that these lads are worth educating, but it shows also that the school must do more than furnish teachers and a place in which to recite part of each day.

If the school is to do its duty by the ignorant lads that come to it from the remote country districts, fired with a desire for education that makes them disregard their own health, it must take care of them, and see that they are in surroundings that will make it possible for them to get the most out of these few precious years.

And it has a duty also to the lads who want good accommodations, and are willing and able to pay for them but at present can have only the unsanitary, dark, often dirty rooms that are all the Korean boarding-house keepers know how to provide.

Further, we owe it to the moral welfare of these lads to gather them in a Dormitory where their conduct can be regulated, and right habits of study encouraged, instead of turning them loose as they are now. This fall we have installed in the recitation building a set of wash basins, with hot and cold water. I wish you could see the lads from near the school swarm there every morning, and the diligence with which they scrub themselves. They appreciate and welcome any chance to improve their standard of living, and every such improvement means more and better work at their studies, more efficiency, in short.

Economy, efficiency, and supervision, are the three things to be gained by a modern dormitory.

There has been some discussion in the Mission on this matter of economy, and some have insisted that dormitories in Korean style are preferable, as easier and cheaper to maintain. In Pyeng Yang the Mission has built some model Korean Style Dormitories, the best of the kind in the country. I quote here from a letter written by Mr. McMurtrie, Pyeng Yang's builder and "Practical man", who designed and built them.

"They are built on native style, so that 4 or more could club together and do their own cooking. Just how much of a success they are along the line I am not sure. If we were building again, I would oppose it, because I believe a better arrangement would be to put up a building in which there would be a central heating plant, and a common dining room. Some such arrangement as that would ensure better supervision, and I believe, a more economical administration."

After writing him the letter that brought this answer, we had done some figuring on the matter. Fuel for a Korean style house is high, and going higher, here. By using city gas for cooking, as some of the missionaries are now doing, and heating the Dormitory from a central plant, in connection with the Industrial Department and the Recitation Building, we can give the boys as good food as they get now in the regular boarding-houses, where 50 % of them live now, for less than they are paying, and give them clean, well-lighted, well-ventilated rooms, with sanitary conveniences. So much for those who are able to pay a good price.

And as for those who are not able to pay so much, we can give them the food needed to keep them fit to study, with accommodations that will greatly increase their efficiency for less than they could live on in any comfort in the present fashion. And we can give all of them the oversight that may be just what they need to make these school years the most valuable years of their whole lives, which is what we are failing, in a large degree, to do now.

With the Industrial Department in running order, and giving employment out of school hours to those who want to work their way, and the Dormitory giving good food at bed-rock prices, no student who has health and a desire to work, need lack a chance for an education.

The accompanying blue-prints show the plans as approved by the Mission. They provide for a building to accommodate 75 boys in the first section (81 by 36 feet) with two other sections to be added as needed. This first section would be filled within a year after it was opened. The plans are for a strictly modern, practically fire-proof, germ-proof, disease-proof structure, of concrete and brick, with water, gas, and steam heat installation, and wired for electrical lights.

|                   |                       |              |
|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| The cost will be: | Building complete     | \$9,000.     |
|                   | Gas, water, and steam | 3,500        |
|                   | Furnishings           | <u>2,000</u> |
|                   | Total                 | \$12,500.    |

Trusting that this proposition will receive your careful attention,

We remain,

Yours sincerely,

E. W. Koons.

Enclosure #1

**Presbyterian Academy in Seoul.**

October 30<sup>th</sup>, 1913.

*The Seoul Press*

The ceremony that will be unique in the history of this city is to take place Thursday.

It is the formal installation of the new Principal of John D. Wells School for Christian Workers, at Yun Dong. This will take place on one afternoon of Thursday, the 30<sup>th</sup>. inst., at 3.30, and will include the Mission Committee having charge of the Institution, local friends of education from the Government Bureaus and other Missions, and the faculty and students of the school. There will be a procession of students in school uniform, with the faculty in their academic gowns, and the new principal will be formally invested with the seals and keys of the school. The feature of the afternoon will be the address by Dr. Goucher, formally President of the Women's College of Baltimore, Md., U.S.A., who is now serving the Edinburgh Conference Continuation Committee as Chairman of the Educational Division. He is in the city for a few days on his way to a meeting of the Continuation Committee at the Hague, and the friends of Education in Seoul may count themselves fortunate in having this opportunity to hear the results of his long experience and wide observation.

From the beginning of Mission Work by the Presbyterian Mission, in 1884 education had a prominent part in its plan, and as soon as the Medical School under Government auspices was well started, a primary school for boys was begun.

This advance in grade of instruction and age of pupils, and in 1900 an academy was organized, which was the beginning of the present institution.

At that time the students numbered about eight and the instruction was not much in advance of the present primary grades in some matters, and in others was more advanced than at present.

The first class was graduated in 1906, and numbered one. It is worth while to note that he is now the Hak-Gam, or assistant Principal, of the Academy, and the hardest working man on the staff.

Until 1906 the school was housed in Korean buildings, part of which are now used for a primary school and the remainder as dormitories and workshops. At that time a brick building was erected, which is part of the present building. The name "Kyung Sin" meaning "Righteous Rejuvenation" was adopted at that time, and is still retained, though in 1910 the name of "John D. Wells Training School for Christian Workers" was adopted as the official designation in English. This name was given in memory of the Rev. John D. Wells, D.D. of New York City, who was for twenty years President of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. As a memorial to him, a fund was raised and the first building erected. This was greatly enlarged three years ago.

It now has room for 400 students, in the chapel and recitation rooms, with special laboratories for biology, physics, and chemistry. The present enrollment is 190, including 15 special students preparing for the medical school at Severance Hospital.

In April of this year a class of 14 was graduated. Of them 8 are now serving as teachers in Church School, and 4 are studying in advanced schools. The total number of graduated to date is 57. Of this total 27 are teachers, one a pastor, 3 others are employed in Church work, 6 are merchants, 12 students, one is a government official, 3 are farmers, and 3 have no special employment while one has died.

The latest development is an extensive department of Industrial Training. This has been carried on in a small way for years, but recently a generous gift from a friend and supporter of the school has made possible the erection of a handsome brick building, and the purchase of machinery. Weaving of cotton goods by the students has been extensively undertaken. Among other things, a set of summer uniforms for the whole school has been made from the school product. Orders for nurses' uniforms for various hospitals have also been filled. Special attention has lately been given to weaving pongee from the Korean wild silk. This is something comparatively new in this country, and if fully carried out, will be a valuable addition to the resources of the country.

Power looms will be installed in the new buildings, as well as the hand and foot looms now in use, and in the time the students will all have a chance to master some form of remunerative employment, while learning the strictly Academic braches of the curriculum.

Enclosure #2

**Presbyterian Academy in Seoul.**

November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1913.

*The Seoul Press*

The formal installation of the Rev. E. W. Koons as Principal of the John D. Wells School, the Presbyterian Academy in Seoul, took place in the school ground on the

Thursday afternoon last. The chief guests present on the occasion were H. E. Mr. Yamagata, Administrative Superintendent, Mr. Higaki, Governor of Kyongki Province, Bishop Harris, Dr. Goucher of Baltimore, and Mr. Yuge, Secretary of the Educational Bureau. There were also present a great number of foreign missionaries and Korean Christians, besides many hundred students of Christian Schools in town. The function, which was presided over by Dr. Avison, was a very interesting and impressive one. Among the speakers on the occasion were Mr. Yamagata, Dr. Goucher and Dr. Gale. Mr. Yamagata read his speech expressive of the congratulations of the Government on the occasion. His Excellency emphasized the need for a school whether Christian or secular, in Chosen to follow the educational lines as shown in the Chosen Educational Ordinance and hoped that the school would give practical education meeting the requirements of the times and popular conditions in Chosen, so that graduates turned out might become useful and loyal citizens. Dr. Gale, in a speech giving the past history and future aim of the school, stated in the management of school and the faculty should not forget three important points, namely the times and conditions in which we were living and the practical usefulness of education. Now that Chosen was a part of the Empire of Japan, Dr. Gale said that Korean young men should be educated so that they might become loyal citizens of the Empire. He further said that they must be instructed in such a way that after their graduation they would prove themselves useful to society, besides being Christian leaders. Dr. Goucher's speech, which was ably interpreted by Mr. Hugh E. Cynn, was very impressive. The venerable gentleman, after referring to the remarkable progress shown in Chosen in recent years, gave a story of his meeting with President Lincoln, when the speaker was still a small boy. He quoted the advice given him then by the great President, which was. "Love God, obey your parents, and be loyal to your State." He advised the young Korean audience present to follow that advice and assured them that if they faithfully followed it the country would have reason to remember them.

The Rev. Mr. Koons, the new Principal, gave an eloquent speech, wishing all friends to assist him in his new duty. A fervent benediction by Bishop Harris closed the function.